

## **CLAIMS**

1. A method for sharing media data between application programs operating on at least one computer system, the computer system having a display and a data storage device, said method comprising:

5 (a) accessing, by a second application program, a data communication file provided by a first application program;

(b) producing a user interface on the display using data from the data communication file;

(c) receiving a user selection with respect to the user interface;

10 (d) identifying a media content file associated with the user selection; and

(e) associating a media content file identified by the user selection to the second application program.

2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the data within the data  
15 communication file includes a link to the media content file.

3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the media content file is stored in the data storage device by the first application program, and thereafter the media content file is useable by the second application program.

20

4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said associating (e) comprises presenting the media content file at the computer system.

5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said associating (e) comprises  
25 playing or displaying, within the second application program on the computer system, media content from the media content file.

6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the user interface includes at least a menu of media items determined from data acquired from the data communication file provided by the first application program.

5 7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the user interface is produced by the second application program.

8. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said method is performed by the second application program.

10

9. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the data communication file is a markup language document.

10. A method as recited in claim 9, wherein the markup language document is an  
15 XML document.

11. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein data within the data communication file pertains to media items managed by the first application program.

20 12. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the data within the data communication file includes at least media item properties and links to storage locations for media content files containing media content for the media items.

13. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said producing (b), said receiving (c),  
25 said identifying (d) and said associating (e) are each able to be performed regardless of whether the first application program is being executed by the computer system.

14. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein said first application program is a music manager and player, and wherein said second application program is an image or video manager and viewer.

5 15. A computer readable medium including at least computer program code for sharing media data between application programs operating on at least one a computer system, said computer readable medium comprising:

computer program code for accessing, by a second application program, a data communication file provided by a first application program;

10 computer program code for producing a user interface using data from the data communication file;

computer program code for receiving a user selection with respect to the user interface;

15 computer program code for identifying a media content file associated with the user selection; and

computer program code for associating a media content file identified by the user selection to the second application program.

16. A method as recited in claim 15,

20 wherein the data within the data communication file includes a link to the media content file, and

wherein the media content file is stored by the first application program, and thereafter the media content file is useable by the second application program.

25 17. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer program code for associating comprises presenting the media content file at the computer system.

18. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the user interface includes at least a list of media items determined from data acquired from the data communication file provided by the first application program.

5 19. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the data communication file is a markup language document.

20. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 19, wherein the markup language document is an XML document.

10

21. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein data within the data communication file pertains to media items managed by the first application program.

15 22. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the data within the data communication file includes at least media item properties and links to storage locations for media content files containing media content for the media items.

20 23. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said computer program code for producing, said computer program code for receiving, said computer program code for identifying and said computer program code for associating are part of the second application program and are each able to be performed regardless of whether the first application program is being executed by  
25 the computer system.

24. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein said first application program is a music manager and player, and wherein said second application program is an image or video manager and viewer.

30

Wherein the data communication file is stored on any of a first application program, a second application program or a third application program.

25. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the first  
5 application program executes on a first computer system, the second application program executes on a second computer system.

26. A computer readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the data  
communication file is stored on the first computer system, the second computer  
10 system, or another computer system.

27. A computer system for sharing media data between application programs operating thereon, said computer system comprising:

a first application program that manages a first media database that contains  
15 at least media information pertaining to media items, said first application further produces a database data communication file that includes at least a portion of the media information of the first media database;

a data storage device that stores the database data communication file and a media content file for each of a plurality of media items; and

20 a second application program that presents a user interface using at least a portion of the media information acquired from the database data communication file.

28. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein said second application program receives a user selection with respect to the user interface, thereby  
25 selecting at least one media item.

29. A computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein said second application program plays or displays media content from the media content file for the selected media item.

30. A computer system as recited in claim 28, wherein said second application program makes use of the media information from the database data communication file or media content from the media content file for the selected media item.

5

31. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein the database data communication file is a markup language document.

32. A computer system as recited in claim 31, wherein the markup language document is an XML document.

10

33. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein the user interface includes at least a list of certain of the media items affiliated with the first media database.

15 34. A computer system as recited in claim 33, wherein the list is a menu.

35. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein said data storage device further stores data forming the first media database.

20 36. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein said first application program updates the database data communication file whenever the first media database is updated.

25 37. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein said first application program updates the database data communication file when the first media database is changed.

38. A computer system as recited in claim 27, wherein said first application program updates the database data communication file when a user interface

window associated with the first application program is context switched into a foreground position.

5